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as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense.

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units.

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted,

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature.

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not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

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621 121 discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure of this process.

621 613 [611] We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always patrilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

621 613 184 [224] [174] Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band composition be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is comparable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology, it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

621 613 174

[182] 621

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent *system* or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

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important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

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the economic and political life, and even in the religious life of the Mbuti, who are supremely concerned with the present.

The effective kinship terminology at once reflects the situation, which only becomes confused when any attempt is made to relate the terms to their usage in village society. It distinguishes generations rather than kin, and cuts indiscriminately across actual kinship boundaries. Through its effective organization of the band into age groups, it emphasizes the economic basis of band unity rather than any kinship bonds. The only terms in general usage in the Epulu region, and among the Mbuti bands to the east-west extremes of the Bira-speaking net-hunting territory, are as follows:

Grandparent:	*tata*	for address and reference
Father:	*epa*	for address and reference
Mother:	*ema*	for address and reference
Sibling:	*apua'i* or *moko*	for address and reference

(*apua'i* is used rather than *moko*, though its connotation is one of close friendship)

Child:	*miki*	for address or reference

Except at the parental level, there is generally no sex differentiation. At times it seems that *taté* is used for grandmother, *tata* for grandfather. Similarly, *amua'i* is a possible variant to denote a female sibling. But as frequently, if not more so, and more consistently, I found *tata* and *apua'i* used for either sex. Differentiation is also made, if necessary, by adding the terms used for boy or girl—*moko* or *kali*, respectively. Thus *miki a moko* is a boy child; *miki a kali* is a girl child. There is also a way of distinguishing the younger from the older: *vomia* is older, *motoa* is younger, but the Mbuti generally only couple these designations to kinship terms in direct imitation of the village usage and only in village contexts.

Bira terminology, with minor dialectal variations, is similar to the above, but with the addition of terms such as *noko* for mother's brother; *kola* for father's sister; *om-epa* and *mot-epa* for the older and younger brother of the father; and *om-ema* and *mot-ema* for the older and younger sister of the mother. The Bira call an older brother *homioné*, an older sister *alwané*, and a younger brother or sister simply *moto*. The Mbuti normally refer to their father's sister simply as *ema* ("mother"), but if trying to refer to her for the benefit of

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villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

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stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical memories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse. (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relationships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

AGE GROUPS

Table 6 shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

A [see page 328 -- Analyst]

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Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to unquestioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the *elima*, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, decides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The *molimo* horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again regardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their comprehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or prohibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is sometimes utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the nonlineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, regardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

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621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
602 power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
82 security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
57 recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
429 with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
82 an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
611 indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

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same age group, and on maturity and marriage the old nuclear family sometimes reaffirms itself as an extended family. The old parents may build a separate hut adjoining the huts of their married children, or even live in the hut of one of their offspring, who will probably build an extension for the purpose. But during adolescence children may well be separated from their biological parents by both time and space. Similarly in adulthood there is not infrequently friction between brothers, sometimes leading to fission within the band.

Finally, in connection with the importance of age as a structural principle, it should be pointed out that the lack of a unilineal system of descent among the Mbuti is associated with a lack of any developed form of ancestor worship. Practices associated with death will be dealt with more fully later; here it need only be said that far from remembering the dead by word or action, the main objective seems to be to forget them. They may never be referred to again, particularly by name, and there is no memorial maintained in their honor, no marked or tended grave site. However, they are by the same token not feared, and insofar as they are remembered at all they are remembered with affection. The concern of the Mbuti is almost exclusively with the present. This is not to say that they deny a past or a future, either in this life or the next; it is merely to say that they believe that by a correct fulfillment of the present, the past and the future will take care of themselves. This correlates with the age-group system and with the dominance and prestige of the two middle groups, the youths and the hunters, for in their hands lies the fulfillment of the present.

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765 534 1178 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [43] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [194] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analyst]

224 796 everyone has had a taste of the raw skin.

Then a small male child, squalling and screaming, is thrust on the elephant's side; he is told to bite, which he does, and the balloon bursts.

This ceremony is repugnant to the pygmies, as they do not like raw meat; it is especially repugnant to the child, who does not enjoy having the whole rotten insides of the elephant burst in his face.

• [611] The child is the youngest son of the man who killed the elephant. If the man has no suitable son, it may be his nephew; or, if he has several young sons and the youngest is too small, either to understand the order or to bite, it will be the next older son.

224 Now that the elephant has burst, the ceremony is over, and a free-for-all takes place; the men cut the sides open, pull out the entrails, and climb inside to hack away at the meat. Other men rush to the head and chop away the tusks. The women take the pieces of meat which their men hand to them, and boil them. As soon as they have cooked one chunk, they will start to [251] boil another. Everyone eats as much of the boiled meat as he is able, and they spread out the rest on drying racks; when it has dried they will take it into the village to the Negroes, who keep it and eat it gradually, for the combination of boiling and drying serves as a means of preserving it, the only food preservation the pygmies practice, and then not for themselves. The tusks go to the special patron of the elephant hunter, and the patron sells them to the Greek or Hindu trader; the patron gives the pygmy a small share of what he receives.

Division of meat.—The need of giving some of the meat to their Negro hosts, and the knowledge that no one will starve as long as they can get bananas, makes the problem of meat di-